

Rombough, Kyrik

From: Smith, Kim
Sent: Monday, November 10, 2008 7:25 AM
To: Gustafson, Brian; Rombough, Kyrik
Cc: Duvall, Ron
Subject: FW: ATTN: Hyperion Air Permit

Brian/Kyrik,

Hyperion comment.

Kim

-----Original Message-----

From: Rumi Weigel [mailto:lildyno3@evertek.net]
Sent: Sunday, November 09, 2008 8:49 PM
To: DENR INTERNET INFORMATION
Subject: ATTN: Hyperion Air Permit

Nov. 9, 2009

RE: Hyperion Air Permit
Elk Point, So. Dakota

In the Elk Point Leader-Courier dated June 21, 2007, South Dakota Tourism and State Development Secretary, Richard Benda, is quoted as saying, "The Governor has said publicly many times, and I have said, and the company [Hyperion] has said, no one wants to locate a facility that would damage our community, our state, or our living environment within the State of South Dakota."

In my opinion, letting Hyperion build an oil refinery in Union County without asking the tough questions would be an enormous mistake. Crude oil refining is one of the most technically intensive industries that exist. The pollution that results can have a major impact on air, soil and water resources. It will also have a huge effect on the surrounding communities and their infrastructures.

A non-polluting, "green" crude oil refinery...that would be a miracle considering the hundreds of chemical compounds that must be handled or eliminated during the refining process. The crude oil that will be processed by Hyperion is not the light, sweet crude that is conventionally drawn from drilled oil wells. The crude oil that Hyperion plans to refine is a heavy, tar-like, low quality crude which is much more of a toxic brew to refine. It must come by pipeline from the Athabasca Tar Sands 300 miles north of Edmonton in Alberta, Canada. It must be pumped through heated pipelines at extremely high pressures. Even a small pipeline leak can turn into a major spill by the time it is discovered by a monitoring station that can be as far as 100 miles away. Besides the many heavy metals contained in this synthetic crude, which include nickel, mercury, arsenic, and lead, it also contains benzene and other chemical compounds that are known carcinogens. Exposure may result in anemia and increased risk in cancer. All of those excess heavy metals and chemical compounds

left over from the refining process have to go somewhere – the air, the soil, the water, perhaps?

People living 25 miles or more away from Hyperion's proposed refinery, which includes the Dakota Dunes and Sioux City, can possibly be more affected than those living next to the refinery because the giant stacks are designed to disperse pollutants away from the refinery zone. The Loess Hills, which lie along the South Dakota/Iowa border could act as a funnel to channel the air pollution from Hyperion's refinery and power plant southward to Sioux City when there is a prevailing north wind.

Then there is a flare-off. What is it? Well, as I understand it, when excess gases must be vented or when any pressure in the process or the equipment becomes dangerously high, or if a batch of fuel does not meet standards or if there is a breach in the refining process, it must be burned in what is called a flare-off. These gases are released from a tall stack that produces a flame as high as 300 feet. It can put out as much pollution in a few hours as would normally be put out in a year.

I use these examples to emphasize the importance of an 'Environmental Impact Study'. Hyperion should provide a complete and thorough EIS report, prepared by an independent company at Hyperion's expense. This is standard procedure for a project of this size and scope. An EIS goes beyond personal agenda and is based on factual data and extrapolated to show what the effects will be on the environment. It also helps to identify what kind of mitigating measures can be taken, if any, to prevent environmental damage.

Please do not just accept Hyperion's promises as fact. Have an independent environmental impact study done before any action is taken.

Thank you.

Rumi Weigel
31865 Henke Rd.
Elk Point, SD 57025

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